



Communication

Press release no. 2007-6

DATE
31 Mei 2007

EU-project catalogues damage caused by pepino mosaic virus in Europe

The opinions held in Europe about the danger of the pepino mosaic virus (PepMV) widely differ. In many European countries, for instance, everything possible is done to prevent or control infection, whereas in other countries the attitude towards the virus is much more noncommittal. An EU-funded project – called Pepeira – will therefore draw up an EU-wide pest risk analysis (PRA) of the dangers of the virus for the European tomato industry and the economic damage caused by the tomato virus.

Twenty partners from Western and Eastern European EU member states are participating in the project. The Dutch participants are Plant Research International and Wageningen UR Glastuinbouw (*Wageningen University and Research Centre Glass horticulture*), both part of Wageningen UR, and the Plant Protection Service (PD).

One of the aims of the project is to precisely establish the extent of the actual economic damage caused by the virus under different growth conditions. Greenhouse tests will be run in four European countries for this purpose. The role played by seeds in transmitting and spreading the virus will also be examined. In the past few years, new strains and recombinants of the virus have appeared in a number of places in the world. The project will also investigate which different strains of the pepino mosaic are found in Europe and what their impact is in spreading the virus and the inherent cultivation problems it causes. In addition, an inventory will be made of the various tests and the various methods of research and detection will be harmonised.

The Pepino virus spreads easily through all kinds of contact: neighbouring plants, crop treatments, walking through the crops and even, although to a lesser degree, by migrating insects. Once the virus is present in the greenhouse, it is virtually impossible to prevent it from spreading. For this reason, prevention is better than cure. Stringent hygiene measures are essential, for instance, the use of protective clothing and disinfection trays for visitors.

For more information: Nora de Rijk, tel. +31 (0)317 47 68 31 or +31 (0)6 51 79 99 48

Plant Research International
B.V.
P.O.Box 16
6700 AA Wageningen
The Netherlands

VISITORS' ADDRESS
Building no. 107
Droevendaalsesteeg 1
6708 PB Wageningen

TELEPHONE
+31 317 47 70 01

FAX
+31 317 41 80 94

INTERNET
www.plantsciencesgroup.nl

E-MAIL
nora.derijk@wur.nl

Plant Research International, Applied
Plant Research and Wageningen
University have combined forces in
the Plant Sciences Group of
Wageningen UR.